(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Sahitya Akademi Awards are not genre based. As per Rules of the Akademi, the awards are given to the most outstanding books published during a specified period on the basis of evaluation made and on recommendation of a Jury consisting of senior writers and scholars of the concerned language.

Religious archaeological sites

†345. SHRI SAMAN PATHAK: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of religious archaeological sites for the foreign tourists visiting the country;

(b) whether Government is contemplating opening of Nathula Way in Sikkim for foreign Buddhist religious tourists;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) There are 3675 monuments/sites declared as of national importance under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958. A number of them are religious or quasi-religious in nature such as temples, mosques, tombs, monasteries, churches, etc.

(b) to (d) As per information made available by the Department of Tourism, Government of Sikkim, Gangtok, there is no proposal at present to open Nathula Way for foreign tourists including pilgrimage tourists.

Prohibited area near monuments

346. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is amending rules relating to prohibited area (100 metres) and regulated area (200 metres) from centrally protected monuments, keeping in view the increase in construction of roads, flyovers, Metro, BRT, etc. especially for the Commonwealth Games;

(b) if so, whether the amended rules would be applied uniformly to all such monuments, or on a monument to monument basis decisions would be taken; and

(c) whether the views of Urban Arts Commission or renowned conservationists have been taken into consideration?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No proposal has so far been mooted to amend the rules relating to 'prohibited' and 'regulated' areas of the centrally protected monuments.

(b) and (c) Questions do not arise.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.